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sections[,] having a prescribed height from a surface of said metallic plate section; and

a plurality of connecting sections each of which connects said adjacent radially extended sections, an outer edge of each of said plurality of connecting sections being formed into a straight line or a curved line expanded outwardly. *with respect to an axis of the collar*

REMARKS

Claims 2-6, 8-10 and 21-29 are now present in the application. Claim 21 is independent. Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

In the Examiner's Non-Responsive Action, the Examiner indicates that additional claim 21 does not read on the elected species, since the Examiner cannot find the disclosure of Figure 5 to have both separations and connecting sections. Specifically, the Examiner indicates that the terms separations and connecting sections do not occur in the present disclosure.

As the Examiner will note, independent claim 21 has been amended to delete the term "separations" therefrom. Furthermore, the specification has been amended on page 10, line 8 to add the sentence "The narrow sections 18b

connect the radially extended sections 18a and are therefore considered to be connecting sections.” Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 1 now clearly reads on the elected invention set forth in Figure 5 of the present invention.

It is noted that Figure 5 is merely a plan view of the base hole 26 bored in the step shown in Figure 4B. In order to gain a full understanding of the present invention illustrated in Figure 5, it is necessary to refer to Figure 2 of the present invention which illustrates the collared tube hole 14 in a completely manufactured form. Referring to Figure 2, a plurality of connecting sections 18b are illustrated connecting adjacent radially extended sections 18a. The connecting sections are formed into a straight line in this view or can be formed as a curved line expanded outwardly as illustrated in Figures 9 and 12 of the present invention.

With regard to the claims which are readable on the elected species, upon a further review of the claims, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 2-6, 8-10, 21-24, 27 and 28 are readable on elected species. The elected species illustrated in Figure 5 includes a flare which includes four radially extended sections and four connecting sections or narrow sections. Since claims 25, 26 and 29 include less than four radially extended sections and connecting sections, they are not readable on the species illustrated in Figure 5. However, it

is noted that upon allowance of independent claim 21, the Examiner should consider claims 25, 26 and 29 since independent claim 21 is generic to the present invention.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that Applicant has now been responsive to the Office Action of April 5, 1999. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to provide an Office Action on the present application.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone Mr. Paul C. Lewis, Registration No. 43,368, at (703) 205-8000, in the Washington, D.C. area.

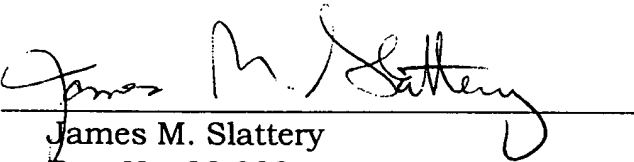
Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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By:



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